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they may become lovers of nature, and thus secure to themselves a perpetual source of improvement and delight.

It is understood that Mr. Audubon is now engaged in preparing an edition of his work with illustrations reduced in size, the price being lessened in the same proportion. As taste and wealth are not always united, there are doubtless many who were utterly unable to possess the former magnificent work, but who would go to the full extent of their means for the sake of having a faithful representation of the birds which he has taught them to admire. There is no work of the kind now within their reach. Wilson's reputation will depend, not upon his drawings, but his eloquent descriptions, while his successor manages the pencil and the pen with equal spirit and power. The times, indeed, are not propitious to such enterprises ; but we rejoice to hear, that subscribers are not wanting ; and they need not be assured, that, if they themselves reap no benefit from their investment, their children will learn to observe, to examine, and to love those works of nature, all of which awaken moral and religious feelings ; so that the same process will refine the taste, enlighten the mind, and purify the heart.

ART. V. — *The Works of LORD CHESTERFIELD, including his Letters to his Son, &c. To which is prefixed, an Original* Life of the Author.* First complete* American Edition. New York : Harper & Brothers. 1838. One volume, 8vo. pp. lxxviii and 647.

LORD CHESTERFIELD's name is intimately connected with the subject of private education and the formation of manners ; and in many minds it is identified with hypocrisy, worldliness, and libertinism. These we suppose are his

* The title-page of this work may mislead the reader on two points. First, the Life is not *original*, since it consists mainly of selections in the very words, from Dr. Maty's *Life of Chesterfield* ; and, secondly, the Edition is not *complete*, as it does not include the Correspondence and Miscellanies, which follow Dr. Maty's *Memoir* and fill two volumes. Perhaps the word "American" was intended to modify the meaning of the word "complete," so that it might be better adapted to our republications of foreign works.

present distinctions, and the chief points for which he will be remembered. His brilliant accomplishments as a courtier and companion, his skill in diplomacy, his refined eloquence, his liberal views and independent course as a statesman, his popularity as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, have passed from the minds of men. They occupy but a small place in general history, and there was nothing in his character or course of life to give them importance beyond the day, merely on account of himself. As a patron of literary men, which he certainly was, he might have promised himself a distant and honorable fame in the writings of poets and historians, whom he had assisted or courted; and yet his connexion with authors would now be scarcely known, but for Johnson's celebrated letter, resenting the Earl's tardy recommendation of the English Dictionary, and some previous supposed slight of the author's application for his favor. Still further, Chesterfield would be scarcely known now as an author (in the usual sense of the term), had not Johnson, in the same letter, designated two papers in "The World," in which his Lordship recommended the forthcoming Dictionary to the public.

And it must be owned that Chesterfield himself, if we may take his word, made no pretension to a literary name. He writes thus on the subject, to Dr. Madden, in 1748, when he was past fifty and living in retirement, and apparently quite competent to give a fair opinion in his own case.

"The few light, trifling things that I have accidentally scribbled in my youth, in the cheerfulness of company, or sometimes, it may be, inspired by wine, do by no means entitle me to the compliments which you make me as an author; and my own vanity is so far from deceiving me upon that subject, that I repent of what I have shown, and only value myself upon what I have had the prudence to burn."—*Miscellaneous Works*, (Dublin, 1777,) Vol. 1. p. 330.

And, again, in his sixtieth year he writes to his friend Dayrolles;

"I will confess to you, that I often scribble. What will finally come of it, I do not know; nothing, I am sure, that shall appear while I am alive, except by chance some short, trifling essays, like the Spectators, upon some new folly or absurdity that may happen to strike me, as I have now and then

helped Mr. Fitz-Adam in his weekly paper called "The World." — *Ibid.* Vol. III. p. 257.

He seems at this period to have contemplated writing historical tracts of his own time, but he had little hope that he should accomplish any thing. His health was broken, long before the weight of years alone would account for his withdrawing from public business and remitting his literary projects. And, though he lived to nearly fourscore, yet for the last twenty-five years of his life, the care of his health, and contrivances for resisting the languor and depression of vertigo and deafness, allowed but brief intervals of repose for mental effort, and little of that "flow of active spirits," he says, "which is so necessary to enable one to do any thing well." Accordingly, we do not find that he left any thing at his death for the printer, and he probably had no thought of posthumous renown for any thing he had written.

The Correspondence on which his fame rests, was published by others, as they could collect it, and probably comprises but a small part of his letters. We are not aware, that he left any directions on the subject, or had any hand in making the collection ; and there is good reason to suppose, that he rarely made copies. As he says, that he never rewrote a letter, we presume that we have his most familiar correspondence in the first draught ; and there is no cause to regret this. Probably, in point of literary excellence, it would have been the worse for retouching ; and, in point of trustworthiness, the difference is great, let the writer be ever so honest, between the first unpremeditated expression, and the carefully corrected and guarded copy which is offered to the general reader. Dr. Maty wishes, that the Earl had lived to publish his letters to his son, as he might then have had an opportunity of expunging some obnoxious passages. The Editor, though a lady, felt no scruples on the subject ; and it might have been difficult for any one, not excepting Chesterfield, to heal a general, lurking disease, by removing eruptions. Dr. Maty's apology is worth something, if intended to screen the Earl from the charge of a deliberate purpose to corrupt the whole body of English youth ; but when he calls the obnoxious passages "transient errors, confined to a period of three or four years," the period may seem pretty long to instill poison into a young mind ; and the Earl's character

will gain little by the apology, when it is considered that the vicious passages were addressed to his own child.

The recent publication of Chesterfield's Letters, in this country, has led us to inquire into his history and writings, with more curiosity than we had ever felt on either subject. We had heard of him in our youth as the great master of manners, the lawgiver and authority on all points of exterior propriety. The name alone, when uttered in a tone of warning, conveyed a censure of all rudeness, and hinted every thing that became a well-bred man. We had read in our school-books several of his excellent letters on good behaviour, and in due time we had learned, that he who could condescend to a boy's civilization, was a peer of England, who had declined a pension and dukedom, and a minister of state, who had retired of his own accord. We might have suspected, and with safety, that much of the sententious wisdom which we had listened to from our elders, was a repetition of the practical sayings of one whom we had regarded, with trembling, as our master of ceremonies. The teacher of accomplishments was also a sage. There was an oracle among the Graces. There can be no doubt of his authority with two generations at least, both here and in Europe, whatever it may be now. The character of his influence we will consider hereafter.

We have spoken of him as indebted for his literary name to the accident that a part of his correspondence was preserved. He was by choice, and upon system, a man of business, of pleasure, and of the world. At the age of nineteen, after passing two years at Cambridge, he set out upon his travels, alone. The custom of gross pleasures at the University, he had deemed a proper accomplishment for an English gentleman; and during his first absence from home he seems not to have wholly freed himself from this rude prejudice. It was at a little later period, that he conceived his idea of a perfectly refined man, and learned to despise his coarse, awkward countrymen, of what rank soever, who herded together for company in foreign states, and sought their pleasures, as at home, in the lowest haunts of vice.

Upon the accession of George the First, he went into the House of Commons and made his first speech in support of the new government. He was yet under twenty-one, and it

is said, that, to avoid the penalty of taking a seat in the House before the legal age, he went a second time to Paris. And here begins his noviciate as a man of fashion, or what he would call a pretty gentleman, one of those “pretty fellows,” for whom we have devised another name. This training, however, is part of his system for moulding a man of action. He had no idea of becoming a beau or coxcomb for the sake of the accomplishment. His fine gentleman is to be a man of power in the highest callings of active life. When he has acquired all learning, and necessarily a great deal of rust with it, he must mix with those who are experienced in high life, that he may obtain the full use of his possessions. The whole body must be taught to serve the mind, and never be in its way ; a noble doctrine, according to the object. He gives his son an account of his embarrassment on first going into company, and the method of relief which a foreign lady adopted for him.

“I remember, that when, with all the awkwardness and rust of Cambridge about me, I was first introduced into good company, I was frightened out of my wits. I was determined to be what I thought civil ; I made fine low bows, and placed myself below everybody ; but when I was spoken to or attempted to speak myself, *obstupui, steteruntque comæ, et vox faucibus hæsit*. If I saw people whisper, I was sure it was at me ; and I thought myself the sole object of either the ridicule or the censure of the whole company, who, God knows, did not trouble their heads about me.” — “If now and then some charitable people, seeing my embarrassment, and being *désœuvrés* themselves, came and spoke to me, I considered them as angels sent to comfort me, and that gave me a little courage. I got more soon afterwards, and was intrepid enough to go up to a fine woman, and tell her that I thought it a warm day. She answered me very civilly, that she thought so too ; upon which the conversation ceased, on my part, for some time, till she, good-naturedly resuming it, spoke to me thus ; ‘I see your embarrassment, and I am sure that the few words you said to me cost you a great deal ; but do not be discouraged for that reason, and avoid good company. We see that you desire to please, and that is the main point ; you want only the manner, and you think you want it still more than you do. You must go through your noviciate before you can profess good-breeding ; and, if you will be my novice, I will present you to my acquaintance as such.’ ‘As soon as I had fumbled

out my answer, she called up three or four people to her, and said, 'Do you know that I have undertaken this young man, and he must be encouraged? As for me, I think I have made a conquest of him; for he just now ventured to tell me, although tremblingly, that it is warm. You will assist me in polishing him. He must necessarily have a passion for somebody; if he does not think me worthy of being the object, we will seek out some other. However, my novice, do not disgrace yourself by frequenting opera girls and actresses,' &c. The company laughed at this lecture, and I was stunned with it. I did not know whether she was serious or in jest. By turns, I was pleased, ashamed, encouraged, and dejected. But when I found afterwards, that both she, and those to whom she had presented me, countenanced and protected me in company, I gradually got more assurance, and began not to be ashamed of endeavouring to be civil. I copied the best masters, at first servilely, afterwards more freely, and at last I joined habit and invention."—*Letters to his Son*, Am. Edition, pp. 318, 319.

It might have been expected, that, after acquiring abroad all the defences and facilities which are to be derived from intercourse with the best society, he would be proof against annoyances in any shape, and able to set himself down in any place and with every sort of people, as if it were his home. But Dr. Maty was told, that his Lordship failed of making a figure in the House of Commons, because of the chagrin he suffered from one of the members, who used to make him ridiculous by mimicking his tone and action. "Possibly," adds the Doctor, "this circumstance, had he remained long in the lower House, might have deprived his country of one of its finest orators." This is almost enough to shake one's faith in the universal sufficiency of a thorough French training. But, fortunately for himself and his country, he was, upon the death of his father, removed to the House of Peers, and is now to be considered as in all respects prepared for a brilliant career as a statesman. Though a man of pleasure and fashion, he had been a close observer of the times at home and abroad. He had applied himself to the study of public law, of foreign policy, institutions, and usages, and of British interests. He had lived in the midst of able public men and orators, and no man surpassed him in the power of turning his experience to good account. He started with Whig principles of government and never deserted them;

but, whether from ambition or virtue, he held himself at liberty to be a Whig of his own sort. He resisted Walpole, till he saw the prostration of his long-held power, and was disgusted with Pulteney for wavering at the moment when he stood before the nation, as “the arbiter between the crown and the people.” He would not be a slave to party names, nor defer to a great leader merely because of his position.

Chesterfield looked for power to his standing well with the people ; and his expressions of deference to the popular will would do honor to any democratic philanthropist of the present day. He takes office in despite of his sovereign’s inclinations, and as if he were doing him a favor, and only glad of power as it may enable him to do more, than he could do out of place, for humanity and peace. Foreigners, whether they meet him as negotiators or companions, are delighted with this rare specimen of urbanity and polish from England. Cheerful, amiable, convivial, a perfect master of himself, his pride held in check by his prudence, his fastidiousness softened by good-nature or cloaked by art, he was accessible to all, and able to impress every sort of men favorably. There was no weakness in his courtesy or conciliation. He was decided and plain-spoken in exacting fidelity from officers in his department, and not less so in appraising his sovereign of what he expected as a condition of his continuing in office. And, last of all, this man of refined pleasure, and literary tastes, and carefully formed by himself to the most perfect observance of artificial manners, is a hard-working man of business. When he was setting out for Ireland as Lord-Lieutenant, he chose for the office of principal secretary, one whom he calls a very genteel, pretty young fellow, but not a man of business ; and he told him on his first visit, “Sir, you will receive the emoluments of your place, but I will do the business myself, being determined to have no first minister.” And hence, perhaps, his great popularity and success, in that most difficult government.

Certainly, the view here given of Chesterfield presents no argument against his system of a fine gentleman’s education, so far as the faithful discharge of public office, or general fitness for any work of civil life, is concerned. There is not one mark of feebleness, indolence, or self-seeking. He is firm, energetic, honorable, fair-minded, and benevolent. And

it is clear, that every man near him is aware of his presence and his power. No doubt, a great deal is still wanting to make him an object of interest. Even the changing fortunes of a public man lend no charm to his history. A baffled and disgraced statesman, driven into exile or waiting for impeachment, has sometimes obtained a place in our affections, which all the splendor, talent, and enterprise of his administration would never have secured. But Chesterfield received no heavy blow from any of his employers. He was never more active and cheerful than while in the opposition ; and when he resigns the seals and retires for ever, it is to suit himself.

“The audience, which Lord Chesterfield had of his Majesty on resigning the seals, passed in a very different way from that which he had four years before, when he took leave on setting out for his embassy. The King urged him to retain his office, and expressed his satisfaction of the manner in which he had filled it. His Lordship’s answer was, that he found he could be but a useless servant, and that his honor and conscience did not permit him to continue in a post, in which he had not been suffered to do any one service to any one man ; and in which his master himself was not at liberty to distinguish those who had his service most at heart. The monarch was not offended at this freedom. He even offered to give him personal marks of his satisfaction, either by a pension or the title of duke. These offers were declined, and only one of the places at the Board of Admiralty, for his brother John Stanhope, accepted. In return, he begged leave to assure his Majesty, that though he ceased now to be in his immediate service, he would never cease to give him proofs of his respectful attachment, and, reserving to himself the liberty of giving his vote on national points as his reason should direct him, he would keep himself entirely clear of cabals and opposition.”—*Maty’s Life of Chesterfield*, pp. 182, 183.

Writing to Dayrolles, shortly after his resignation, he says,

“I shall now, for the first time in my life, enjoy that philosophical quiet, which, upon my word, I have long wished for. While I was able, that is, while I was young, I lived in a constant dissipation and tumult of pleasures ; the hurry and plague of business, either in or out of court, succeeded, and continued till now. And it is now time to think of the only real comforts in the latter end of life, quiet, liberty, and health. Do not think, by the way, that by quiet and retirement, I mean soli-

tude and misanthropy ; far from it ; my philosophy, as you know, is of a cheerful and social nature. My horse, my books, and my friends will divide my time pretty equally. I shall not keep less company, but only better, for I shall choose it." — *Miscellaneous Works*, Vol. III. pp. 177, 178.

Such language is very common in the mouths of retired statesmen, but probably is not often as sincere as in the present case. So far as we can discern, Chesterfield would not suffer himself any more than another man to deceive him, nor use unmeaning commonplaces, when he was talking to a friend of his own state. Disease followed him to his retirement, and his philosophy was soon to have its trial. And it is now that for the first time we see a shade of tenderness and privacy stealing over his mind. For once, his pursuits seem to be wholly suggested by his condition, and therefore to be natural, or, at least, unforced. He is in his garden, or among his books and his friends, or corresponding with the absent, or occupied with building a house in town and furnishing it to his taste, and collecting pictures and arranging his library ; and in summer he is improving his beloved villa and grounds at Blackheath. For once, he is conversing with people as if they were private men, and had an interest in him and a beauty in themselves, unconnected with the charm of mere manners and the fascination of public office. To say, as many readers probably will do, that he has no depth of feeling, no romance, no poetry, no undefined visions of glory in the improvement of his own soul, is to say what he would have admitted as not entering into his plan or into his nature. He would not have admitted, however, nor would it have been true, that the strictest adherence to his system of manners, or devotion to affairs of state, necessarily brings to an end whatever of imagination and warmth may have belonged to the mind originally. The natural quality is not so easily destroyed, if it ever existed in any considerable strength. But he had little or none of it. He was content to accomplish what he aimed at. The object was not very high ; and he would only have been impeded by affections and desires, which naturally looked another way and far higher.

It was at this period of illness and decay, and of subdued ambition, that Johnson took offence at the Earl's superfluous patronage, and recalled an instance of his real or supposed

neglect in former years, when encouragement was needed. Johnson had a right to his own view of the matter, and Boswell has given it to the public. Chesterfield, it should seem, took no notice of the indignant letter beyond reading it to his visitors, commending the style, extolling the powers of the writer, and pointing out the severest passages ; and this liberality and indifference are ascribed to duplicity. He had been a patron of Johnson, and it has been said, that he hoped to secure the dedication by publicly showing an interest in the English Dictionary on the eve of its publication. And as it is assumed, that he must have been mortified by Johnson's disdainful repulse of his commendation, what else could he do but appear magnanimous and unhurt ? Certainly, nothing else but to be so. Why should we enter so narrowly into the motives of this old man of the world, who had, for all that appears, done nothing more than a kind and seasonable act for an adventurous author ? He did not go out of his way to offer a compliment to Johnson, for he was already a contributor to " *The World* " ; and the style of the two papers referred to is as familiar, and the topics are sometimes as light, as those of his other essays. Probably he was glad to have so good a subject for a new article ; and felt much less disquiet about the whole affair than Johnson. He would, we believe, have given Johnson money after the letter, as cheerfully as he had done before ; and he would have done it, we believe, after the publication of the Dictionary without a dedication ; and this too would have been ascribed to duplicity. We see little, in his history, that shows sensitiveness on the score of vanity, and therefore have little reason to suspect him of practising art to conceal the torture of a wound. He probably received Johnson's taunting letter with more composure than he would have received a visit from him, with the most flattering dedication in his hand. And here, if we are allowed to entertain a not very unreasonable conjecture, we may find one mode of explaining why matters should not stand very propitiously between the parties. What contrast can we imagine more strong than between these two men at any period of their lives ? The delicacy of the one might be false, and the ungracefulness of the other was a misfortune for which he was not to blame ; but we are speaking of tastes in the choice of our society, a point on which no man should bear dictation.

The Earl would have endured Johnson, if necessary, or else he had gone to the school of manners for nothing ; but he would most probably have held it a better course to avoid him. Such we may suppose to have been the relation between the parties, before Chesterfield had grown old, deaf, infirm, and humbled by slow decay, and had withdrawn to seek, within a limited circle of friends, and in a few unambitious employments, the only relief he expected but death. What must the relation have been afterwards ?

Johnson was more reserved than Chesterfield about the letter, but he seems to have made up for his abstinence by assailing him on other points. He said of the “ Letters to his Son,” that they “ taught the morals of a prostitute and the manners of a dancing master ” ; and there is much truth in the denunciation. But when he calls him “ a wit among lords,” we cannot perceive equal application in the sarcasm, if the term is used in its ordinary modern sense. It cannot be just in its contemptuous bearing upon the English peers ; and, as to Chesterfield’s wit, though not of the highest order, it is prompt, flowing, and graceful, and belongs to the matter, and runs in the best English of the age. It is the most natural thing about him. If a lord could relish it, we should think none the worse of him for it. Those who dislike the French, may call it French wit ; those who regard him as a *petit-maitre* in every thing, may call it fashionable wit. These are phrases, and they are meant for something ; but the wit is very agreeable notwithstanding.

It is a practice with some to sneer at the literature of that age for its barrenness, flimsiness, and varnish. It would have been better, if the changes, which are supposed to have put us so far forward, had taught us the first and most natural lesson, which a sense of superiority in any thing should inculcate, — the lesson of humility. No portion of the past is worthless as a study, and none is unconnected with the state of things which follows. When we have passed through a few more changes, we shall begin to feel our literary connexion with the last century to be a privilege, and to inquire how we came to overlook it ; how we could suppose that a modern age, which abounded with great spirits in science, theology, and the questions of political freedom, should have been meagre in elegant and popular literature. We shall begin to

observe with some interest, that a system of taste and of literary propriety, partly scholastic and partly modish, had power enough then to fasten itself upon men of the highest genius, who would have been part of the glory of England in any age, and who were capable, one would think, of effecting a radical change in letters whenever they chose. We shall observe, that it was the trying time for authors, when men in power began to discourse upon settling the language, and particular writers of the day were put forward as authorities. It cannot be above the spirit of any sound philosophy to observe the workings of really powerful minds under restraints and influences like these, and how much they accomplished, and how well our language passed through the inquisition. And quite as important will it be to observe the course of some who broke loose ; for, instead of returning to what is simple and true, as they would have done if instinct had not been harmed, they ran into pedantry, conceit, bombast, or vulgarity, each according to his temper, with the merit, however, that they were original in their errors, and more than atoned for them by their vigor and their example of freedom. Men should never talk contemptuously or lightly of English literature in any part of the eighteenth century.

If we have been drawn from our subject, we return to it to say, that Chesterfield was not one of the sufferers. He was thoroughly a man of the time in literature, and wore his chains like a gentleman. They were an ornament. He could not have spared them. To be clear-headed, and free from all mistakes about himself, with vivacity, shrewdness, and fancy enough for a wit, with the best society at home and abroad at his command, and a good library, — these were qualities and advantages for a man of letters, which he would prize higher than the lawless excursions and original meditations of genius.

A few personal passages from his letters will show the state of his mind in retirement, and his general estimate of himself. The first extract is from a letter to his son, in his sixty-sixth year.

“I have been settled here [Blackheath] near a week ; *c'est ma place*, and I know it, which is not given to everybody. Cut off from social life by my deafness, as well as other physical ills, and being at best but the ghost of my former self, I walk here in silence and solitude as becomes a ghost ; with this only

difference that I walk by day, whereas, you know, to be sure, that other ghosts only appear by night. My health, however, is better than it was last year, thanks to my almost total milk diet. This enables me to vary my solitary amusements, and alternately to scribble as well as read, which I could not do last year. Thus I saunter away the remainder, be it more or less, of an agitated and active life, now reduced (and I am not sure that I am a loser by the change) to so quiet and serene a one, that it may be properly called still life." — *Letters to his Son*, p. 569.

The next year he writes to his friend, the Bishop of Waterford,

"I now read Solomon with a sort of sympathetic feeling. I have been as wicked and as vain, though not so wise as he; but am now at last wise enough to feel and attest the truth of his reflection, that all is vanity and vexation of spirit. This truth is never sufficiently discovered, or felt, by mere speculation; experience in this case is necessary for conviction, though perhaps at the expense of some morality." — *Miscellaneous Works*, Vol. III. p. 361.

If in the flood-time of health and spirits, he had nothing of the moderation and tranquillity of Epicurus, the spirit of his philosophy seems to be gathering over him now.

"All the infirmities of an age, still more advanced than mine, crowd in upon me. I must bear them as well as I can; they are more or less the lot of humanity, and I have no claim to an exclusive privilege against them. In this situation, you will easily suppose that I have no very pleasant hours; but on the other hand, thank God, I have not one melancholy one; and I rather think that my philosophy increases with my infirmities. Pleasures I think of no more; let those run after them that can overtake them, but I will not hobble and halt after them in vain. My comfort and amusements must be internal; and, by good luck, I am not afraid of looking inwards. Some reading, some writing, some trifling in my garden, and some contemplation, concur in making me never less alone than when alone. But this letter runs too much into the moral essay of a *solitaire*." — *To Dayrolles*, *Ibid.* Vol. III. p. 266.

The Bishop of Waterford seems to have addressed the Earl on the subject of religion; and, from a few passages in his replies, we may learn, to some extent, how he regarded religion in its relations to himself.

"As to the letter, which you feared might have displeased

me, I protest, my dear Lord, I looked upon it as the tenderest mark of your friendship ; I had given occasion to it, and I expected it both from your affection and your character. Those reflections are never improper, though too often unwelcome, and consequently useless, in youth ; but I am now come to a time of life both to make and receive them with satisfaction, and therefore I hope with utility. One cannot think of one's own existence, without thinking of the eternal Author of it ; and one cannot consider his physical or moral attributes without some fear, though in my mind still more hope. It is true we can have no adequate notions of the attributes of a being so infinitely superior to us ; but, according to the best notions which we are capable of forming of his justice and mercy, the latter, which is the comfortable scale, seems necessarily to preponderate." — *Ibid.* Vol. III. p. 339.

"I have within these few months more than once seen death very near, and when one does see it near, let the best or the worst people say what they please, it is a very serious consideration. I thank God, I saw it without very great terrors ; but at the same time the divine attribute of mercy, which gives us comfort, cannot make us forget, nor ought it, his attribute of justice, which must blend some fears with our hopes." — *Ibid.* p. 359.

With this brief notice of Chesterfield, and leaving out of consideration his general abilities, and his opinions on public affairs and many other subjects, we proceed to take some notice of the only work for which he is at all popularly known, the "Letters to his Son" ; and these will be considered chiefly as containing a system of manners. In a letter to his favorite Parisian correspondent, a lady of rank and accomplishments, he gives the following account of the youth, and of his purposes in regard to him.

"I have a boy who is now thirteen. I will freely own to you, that he is not a legitimate child ; but his mother is a gentlewoman, and has shown a partiality for me beyond my deserts. As for the boy, I may be prejudiced in his favor, but I think him amiable. His person is pretty, he is very sprightly, and does not seem to want sense for his age. He speaks French perfectly well, knows a good deal of Latin and Greek, and is thoroughly acquainted with ancient and modern history. He is now at school, where I intend to keep him till May next ; but as, in our schools, and indeed in this country, little care is taken to form the morals and manners of young people, and as

most of them are silly, awkward, and rude ; in short, such as you see them when they come to Paris, at the age of twenty or twenty-one, I will not let my boy stay here long enough to contract those bad habits, which, once taken, are seldom shaken off ; therefore, at fourteen I shall send him to Paris, and put him to board in some substantial family. But, as he will be still very young, and will not have nearly completed his necessary studies, I shall send an Englishman along with him, a man of consummate erudition, who will keep up and improve his Latin and Greek, and teach him logic, rhetoric, and a little philosophy. This learned man will have him entirely under his government at home, and all the morning ; but, as he is not altogether qualified to polish his manners, or, if you will, to give him the *ton* of good company, which, however, is highly necessary, and perhaps as serviceable as all the Greek and Latin of Monsieur Vadius, could not I get at Paris some man, or some Abbé, who (for money which I should gladly give) would undertake the care of the lad from four in the afternoon ; who would carry him to the play, to the opera, and even attend him to your house, if you would give him leave to wait on you ? As I am infinitely fond of this child, and shall take a pride in making something of him, since I believe the materials are good, my notion is to unite in him what I have never yet met with in any one individual ; I mean, what is best in both nations. For this purpose, I intend him his learned Englishman, who is likewise a man of sense, for the solid learning I would have him possessed of, and his French afternoon tutor to give him, with the help of the companies into which he will introduce him, that ease, those manners, those graces, which certainly are nowhere to be found but in France.” — “ If I may presume to ask it, will you permit him sometimes to be your page in an evening, to give out the cards, to present the coffee, and reach the chairs ? That indeed would be his best school, but I dare not so much as think of it. As the circumstance of his birth might be prejudicial to him in the opinion of some, I think it is best not to divulge it, but to give out he is a nephew of mine, as the cardinals do.” — *Ibid.* Vol. II. pp. 340, 342.

To the care of this darling child, he devoted himself with a warmth and anxious oversight, that appear only to be heightened by the circumstance of his birth. No one can doubt that the charge of his education is, of all his enterprises, the nearest his heart, and that he is willing to give his life to it. Nothing displaces it, and every thing and person should seem

to be made in some way connected with it. He began the series of letters of which we are to speak, when the child was but five or six years old, and it terminated only with his son's death. The object of the letters is to furnish a course of education, that shall prepare a man for success in public life ; and the instruction is ever accompanied by motives to obedience, drawn from a respect to his own eminence, and the debt he owes to a fond and ambitious parent. Chesterfield was too wrapped up in his hopes of the youth to weigh the case fairly. He probably thought but little of the slights to which his birth was to subject him, or he might have imagined that they together would be more than a match for the prejudices of such an age. He would not allow himself to see that the capacity he was training, though respectable, was but ordinary ; or that there was any thing ungainly in young Stanhope's appearance or manners, that would not yield to a residence in Paris. In due time, he brought him into Parliament, and his first speech was his last. He failed. His father's long inculcation of the necessity of attaining perfect self-possession, and of preparing himself for the kind of eloquence that would suit the House, together with the warning that he must first make a figure there, if he would make a figure or fortune in his country, — all were baffled. But he is gentle with him, kind, and encouraging. The veteran has sympathy with the infirmity of his novice. There is no misgiving, no offer to settle a competency upon him, that he may retire to an honest obscurity, where the pride of the well-born will not wound him, nor the sense of his incapacity for business be a source of mortification. No ; if he cannot figure in Parliament, he still may be a resident at some court, as was contemplated from the beginning. Situations were obtained for him, and, before reaching the prime of life, he died abroad.

Thus was the seal set upon what seems to have been a signal failure. We do not know whether the system pursued had even been so far successful as to corrupt the young man's heart. Probably he was not the sort of man to be made a complete impersonation of the Earl's great idea of human perfection. But it must be allowed, that paternal assiduity, whether for good or ill, could not be carried further. The youth had been watched and hovered over in his years of separation, with anxiety and hope, in every place and at every

hour. He had been so warned and encouraged, that he could scarcely help feeling either that there was much laid up in him to be developed, or that so much pains must perforce create something uncommon ; and that, in the end, a grand scheme of youthful culture would be exemplified in him. And all had failed, and death had caused but a small part of the failure. Last of all, he had been uniformly treated by his father with a confiding freedom in all matters that he thought would do him any good, and equal confidence in return could not be doubted in any case ; and yet, shortly after his death, the Earl was visited by a lady, with her two children, who came to inform him, that she had been married to Mr. Stanhope for several years. We cannot say whether Chesterfield's conduct, upon receiving this intelligence, proceeded from duplicity, or good-nature, or love that no wrong could slay, or from the reflection that he, who had taught dissimulation, deserved its first fruits ; but certain it is, that he did not suffer resentment of this ungenerous concealment to fall upon the living ; for he took upon himself the care of providing for the children, and some very affectionate letters remain which he addressed to them and their mother. Such was the Earl's paternal affection, and such the ending of his vast preparation and hope.

We come now to his plan of education. The first thing that strikes one is its minuteness, its pertinacious notice and reiteration of the smallest things which enter into his notion of a complete man. He evidently puts out of consideration the work which every boy should be left to do for himself ; and would scorn the theory, that no teaching whatever should aim at any thing beyond giving to the mind a safe action. The whole application of a good lesson, and the whole result, he would leave with the master. The pupil is in every thing to be another man's workmanship. If the artist is satisfied, there is no more to be desired. This we gather from the general spirit and manner of the instruction, and should not be induced to think differently by occasional hints, that are more liberal and just. The question is not, whether a comprehensive plan of education in general is hurtful ; whether certain principles and methods are not to be recognised as essential, and distinct objects to be proposed. But is a constant oversight for the purpose of making the system work

according to our notion in every thing, a perpetual warning that an omission, deviation, or addition is necessarily a fault, — is this course favorable to vigor, courage, independence, originality, and deep moral impulses? Again, the objection here, though in some respects a very important one, is not to unity in our object, and keeping one great aim for ever in the pupil's sight. Singleness of purpose often creates power, by holding a man strictly to one, simple, sharply-defined course. Hannibal took his oath of eternal hostility when a boy, and we know what came of his nourishing this one passion through life. But an objection does lie against a teasing, petty, foreign interference with every act, scheme, pleasure, and acquisition of a young mind, with a view of achieving our own object. It would be dangerous, even if it were studiously adapted to the boy's natural bent.

Chesterfield, it must be acknowledged, had but one object in view in educating his son, and that was to make him a statesman; and he cared not what he risked by holding up public life and all its appurtenances for ever before his pupil. It would not be easy to say what special teaching is needed for a politician; but the views of the present teacher are plain enough. A character formed under domestic influences, had such a thing been practicable in young Stanhope's case, was not desired. An English home, English playmates, English manners, would make him nothing better than a patriotic boor. He must live out of England to be fit to live in it. If he could have obtained fortune and distinction equally well as an adopted Frenchman, the Earl, with all his Whiggism, would probably have consented to the expatriation. But it would certainly be a greater triumph still, to come home an accomplished man of no country, flexible and prepared for people of every clime, station, and taste, — a universal stranger, a non-resident with a home everywhere, who was provided with a code of observances, a rule of practice, which saved all study and feeling, and suited everybody, and served all the purposes of natural sagacity and a profound knowledge of man. A law of amenity, condescension, and seeming self-forgetfulness, founded upon full faith in the weakness and self-love of every human being, was better than the instinctive impulses of benevolence, which are more likely to gush out in exaggerated acts of kindness, than to breathe that subdued sympa-

thy which owes every thing to manner. The system, in short, was a partial one, and meant to be partial ; and, whether good or bad, it was not at all impracticable in itself. And those who take it up as of general application, and designed to form the habits and direct the pursuits of the mass, would, after so fair notice is given in every page, have themselves alone to blame, were not the system so built upon human frailties in every condition of life, and so seductive in its substitution of appearances for inherent qualities, that many simple-minded people might be tempted to adopt its superficiality, and make themselves fools and rakes instead of accomplished public characters.

But we must consider more particularly Chesterfield's estimate of manners, and the discipline he enjoined for forming them. His view of the whole subject may be superficial and false, and unquestionably his aim is often low and vicious ; but he certainly has drawn attention to the subject ; and the importance of good-breeding is not easily overrated, in whatever light we regard it. Addison calls it "a kind of artificial humanity." It begins in natural feeling, and supplies a natural want, — *Ubi homines sunt, modi sunt* ; but our way of living together, the terms on which we shall exercise our natural liberty in social life, are conventional or customary, and so far artificial. Manners, it is true, sometimes lose much of their original significance, and become little more than form. At the highest pitch of refinement, they are often rendered ludicrous by the anxious observance of punctilio, and the airs and grimace of coxcombs. And at any time they may be made the instruments of hypocrisy. They are not unchangeable, like the instinctive courtesies of inferior animals, nor, like them, incapable of being perverted. And well-bred men of the same community may, from some diversity in their temper or associations, differ in the degree, and somewhat in the form, of their courtesy and deference. But, whatever may be the *mode*, manners themselves, in their origin and purpose, are moral expressions. They do not exist because we choose to have them, but because we choose to live together ; nor is it in our power to put them aside and do without them. And he who will not conform to the usages of the class he moves in, is justly considered as neglecting some duty, and infringing some right. As expressions of respect

and good-feeling, then, the observance of manners cannot necessarily or naturally lead to insincerity or folly ; and he who has brought them to the utmost perfection in himself incurs no peril on that account, unless we consider every thing unsafe in a moral view, the moment it becomes a habit.

But they are more than proofs or signs of benevolence and respect. It is well remarked by Scott, "that some forms and restraints are to be observed, less in respect to others than to ourselves." He who religiously bridles the tongue is unconsciously keeping the heart. A man may abstain from loud laughter, not merely because some think it rude, but also because he feels that it encourages frivolity and endangers seriousness of character. And further, the least wilful indifference to the feelings of another, be it upon his weak point or not, may be, and often is, the beginning of hard-heartedness, and some portion of our delicacy is about to be sacrificed. A system of manners, then, perfectly acquired, is a perpetual hint to watchfulness over ourselves ; it is a guardian of our self-respect and of our benevolence.

Now suppose a man to adopt this system, and carry it to perfection for the purpose of substituting it in the place of feeling ; and he at once gives up the whole ground and reason of manners. He does more than practise forms unmeaningly from habit, in which case he is rarely misunderstood ; he deliberately and purposely makes the form supreme, and gives it an exaggerated significance. Whatever his intentions may be, he has exposed himself to the corrupting power of falsehood, in one of its most treacherous shapes. If religion elevates sculpture and painting, it is itself debased when the image is worshipped. And so it is with benevolence and manners ; if the sign becomes the idol, the original sentiment is abused and degraded. And it is, in part, for this substitution, that Chesterfield has been condemned. To take him on the most favorable side ; — he abhorred every practice and appearance which unfitted men for agreeable intercourse, which broke the level and smoothness of elegant life, and reminded people unpleasantly of individual peculiarities. Gentlemen should meet on, at least, as comfortable an equality as boors. This is well enough. But boors are at least sincere. Will it do for gentlemen to be sincere ? He evidently thought not. He had no faith in training a good feeling to observances, and

put it aside as merely useful in suggesting convenient signs. He probably never asked himself how much inward disease he might cause, or exasperate, by his attempt to improve the complexion with lotions. He admired the benevolent air of society which gave the French their charm, and thought the only way to make an Englishman tolerable was to apply the foreign varnish ; when probably the only thing wanted was a home-born politeness, that would suit the English character, and that true ease of conversation which shows that, by conquering embarrassment, we have become more truly ourselves. His remedy for the false shame of his countrymen was to send them out into the world to get an armour of usages for security ; the defences and resources that might have been found in good principles and dispositions were overlooked. In general, he would rather make a false man to his taste, than honestly educate a savage according to his nature.

And yet we can hardly say, that we have felt a proper indignation at reading letter after letter, addressed to a mere lad, and a beloved child, inculcating a systematized lie as his true preparation for meeting the world. This instruction is all so blended with parental solicitude, so mixed up with other things, and relieved by wise observations on human life and excellent rules of conduct for anybody ; there is such avowed abhorrence of every thing mean and low in our vices, such careful distinction between deceptive reserve and a spoken lie ; the directions are given so naturally, as if the boy must at once perceive that things are just so and must be so, however it may be disguised by prudes and priests ; the manner, moreover, is so frank, unpretending, and business-like, and allowances are so charitably made for every thing but standing ill with others for what cause soever ; that one reads on with more patience than he may afterwards be disposed to justify. And, if the worst should happen, if the enchanter should quite overcome him, is it no alleviation that, whatever his change may be, he will not be transformed into a swine ?

It is not common to call such a man as Chesterfield a fanatic ; but he must have been one, in no ordinary degree. To take a single instance, what religionist was ever more scrupulous in attention to externals ? What care, what torture, to train the person. What a battle with self for appearance only. A fiercer struggle would not be required to make us spiritual.

The importance of a good demeanor and address is not to be disputed ; but one is surprised at the prominence that is given to them, the ceaseless warnings that are uttered, and the variety of methods suggested. He forgets, that, with Chesterfield, they are of infinite value in themselves ; that they must be made a part of the man, and be cultivated as some would cultivate the affections. We can recall but one other authentic case in which this part of the system has been put in full practice ; and, as it will serve better than a caricature, we will venture to state the process. We refer to the case of Mr. Day, the author of *Sandford and Merton*, and a fanatic of another sort, as he detested fashion, dancing, dress, and all other frivolities of the kind. We borrow the particulars from Mr. Edgeworth's autobiography. It seems, that Mr. Day had become attached to a lady of the family, so distinguished in the history of Mr. Edgeworth's marriages ; and, though " his person was neither formed by nature, nor cultivated by art, to please," the lady appears to have been sufficiently interested to put him upon his probation ; and, on Chesterfield's plan, she sent him to the great foreign school of accomplishments. Mr. Edgeworth, who accompanied him, says,

" We determined to pass the winter at Lyons, as it was a place where excellent masters, of all sorts, were to be found ; and here Mr. Day put himself to every species of torture to compel his anti-gallican limbs, in spite of their natural rigidity, to dance and fence, and manage the great horse. To perform his promise to Miss E. Sneyd honorably, he gave up seven or eight hours of the day to these exercises, for which he had not the slightest taste, and for which, except horsemanship, he manifested the most sovereign contempt. It was astonishing to behold the energy with which he persevered in these pursuits. I have seen him stand between two boards which reached from the ground higher than his knees ; these boards were adjusted with screws, so as barely to permit him to bend his knees, and to rise up and sink down. By these means, M. Huise proposed to force Mr. Day's knees outward ; but his screwing was in vain. I could not help pitying my philosophic friend, with his feet in the stocks, a book in his hand, and contempt in his heart." — *Memoirs of Richard Lovell Edgeworth*, Vol. I. pp. 260, 261.

Some time afterwards Mr. Edgeworth states the result.

" Upon Mr. Day's return from France, Miss Elizabeth

Sneyd found, that, notwithstanding all the exertions he had made, and the pains he had taken to improve his manners and person, she could not feel for him the sort of attachment which was necessary for her happiness and for his in marriage." — pp. 335, 336.

Chesterfield's theory of manners, then, is deliberately formed and carried out upon the idea, that appearance (including not only the person but our whole demeanor towards others) is all-sufficient and alone effectual. And, according to the same theory, this appearance can only be secured by observation of life and constant practice. Spontaneous feelings could be of no use to a pantomime; they would only embarrass the process of artificial movements, as the fairest wind is said to disturb the action of the apparatus of a steam-vessel. And now we are brought to the motive for urging this exaggerated regard for externals. The result, indeed, would ordinarily be the same, whatever the intention; but the intention is clear. Man is held up as an object of distrust and contempt. He is cunning, but weak, and to be approached on the side of his weaknesses. You are not to reform him, or inquire whether your artifices will not help to perpetuate the evil; but, taking him as he is, you are to circumvent him and use him for your purposes; and this you can best accomplish by appearances and the hypocrisy of benevolence.

"The more you know men, the less you will trust them. The same arts and tricks, that boys will now try upon you for balls, bats, and halfpence, men will make use of with you, when you are a man, for other purposes." — *Letters to his Son*, p. 136.

"If you would particularly gain the affection and friendship of particular people, whether men or women, endeavour to find out their predominant excellency, if they have one, and their prevailing weakness, which everybody has; and do justice to the one, and something more than justice to the other."

"You will easily discover every man's prevailing vanity, by observing his favorite topic of conversation; for every man talks most of what he has most a mind to be thought to excel in. Touch him but there, and you touch him to the quick."

"Women have, in general, but one object, which is their beauty; upon which scarce any flattery is too gross for them

to swallow. Nature has hardly formed a woman ugly enough to be insensible to flattery upon her person. An undoubted, uncontested, conscious beauty is, of all women, the least sensible of flattery upon that head ; she knows it is her due, and is therefore obliged to nobody for giving it her. She must be flattered upon her understanding ; which, though she may possibly not doubt of herself, yet she suspects that men may distrust." — pp. 161, 162.

" Seek for men's particular merit, their predominant passion, or their prevailing weakness ; and you will then know what to bait your hook with to catch them." — p. 210.

" Please the eyes and the ears ; they will introduce you to the heart ; and nine times in ten the heart governs the understanding."

" Speak advantageously of people behind their backs, in companies who, you have reason to believe, will tell them again." — p. 255.

" Showish and shining people always get the better of all others, though ever so solid." — p. 408.*

Of course, we shall not quote passages, in which he recommends refined debauchery under the name of gallantry, and confidentially presents his own example ; or those, in which he describes the arts by which a married woman is to be corrupted, and which the editor, Mrs. Stanhope, has done what she could to vindicate. In fact, these passages give us no more unfavorable opinion of the writer and his system, than those we have already copied ; and we cannot but regard the suggestions as entering naturally into the general culture of his " unseasoned courtier."

It is probable, that Chesterfield has been judged by the world, on all points, by the moral unsoundness exhibited in

* When we think over the long and laborious process of deception which Chesterfield prescribed, to equip his son for dealing with men, we are agreeably reminded of a more easy and succinct method, which was adopted by his kinsman and contemporary, Earl Stanhope, while Secretary of State. We do not know, whether the whole race had a turn for artifice ; but, if there must be false dealing, we prefer that which has some humor in it. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, in a letter to her daughter, the Countess of Bute, says, " I can truly affirm, that I never deceived anybody in my life, excepting (which has often, I confess, happened undesigned) by speaking plainly ; as Earl Stanhope used to say, during his ministry, he always imposed on the foreign ministers by telling them the naked truth, which, as they thought impossible to come from the mouth of a statesman, they never failed to write information to their respective courts directly contrary to the assurance he gave them."

the "Letters to his Son." He has been held as responsible for the work as if he had published it. He came into our houses with his system, and sought the confidence of our boys and young men, and gave a pungency and authority to his instructions by offering them as the real communications of a parent to a cherished son. A vicious romance, or unsound theories and speculations upon life and character, conveyed in a didactic treatise, might not have so armed the world against him. We have here one of the cases, in which an able man excites more alarm, and does more mischief, by direct appeals to consciousness and experience, than by presenting glowing pictures to the imagination. It is not surprising, then, that he has been condemned in the mass. But the reader, who has forbearance enough to discriminate, will not deny, that these "Letters" contain a great amount of practical good sense; that the sketches of character and defects are in the first style of diverting and instructive satire; and that the composition has the animation and grace which we should expect from a highly cultivated mind, occupied with delightful visions of a young man rising into brilliant fame under its guidance. And the reader, who can be satisfied with skilful and perfectly intelligible accounts of man as he is, — the superficial man of daily life, — and who can believe, that principles, drawn from observation of men under such an aspect merely, or even warranted by his sense of the tendencies which his connexion with the world has given to himself, — involve the whole of human nature; will discover, in these "Letters," as good a summary of wisdom as he ever found in a collection of French, or, perhaps, Roman sentences.

Johnson's short-hand condemnation of Chesterfield has already been cited; and it is faulty in nothing, but that it appears to include all that can be said of him. Such is the sophistry of many a brilliant antithesis. Cowper's amplified execration is scarcely less spirited, and it has the same defect.

"Thou polished and high-finished foe to truth,
Gray-beard corrupter of our listening youth;
To purge and skim away the filth of vice,
That so refined it might the more entice,
Then pour it on the morals of thy son;
To taint *his* heart was worthy of *thine own* !

Now, while the poison all high life pervades,
 Write, if thou canst, one letter from the shades ;
 One, and one only, charged with deep regret,
 That thy worst part, thy principles, live yet ;
 One sad epistle thence may cure mankind
 Of the plague spread by bundles left behind."

— *The Progress of Error.*

Mr. Bulwer, who, by his abhorrence of cant and usage, is made fond of paradoxical interpretations and defences, has come out earnestly on the side of Chesterfield. In his "Dis-owned," he makes Mr. Talbot say,

"It seems strange enough, that a free country, like ours, where it is important to please every class, should, of all modern nations, appear the most zealously to condemn, rather than merely to neglect, manners and address."

Mr. Talbot considers the sea of manners as unexplored, or that Chesterfield is almost the only Englishman who has attempted a chart of the unknown deep. And Mr. Bulwer, speaking in his own person, is of opinion, that Chesterfield has been misunderstood, as to his "Letters" especially, and says, he intends to take an early opportunity "to do justice to a great man." He asks why Chesterfield should not be venerated as "the philosopher of benevolence, and the expounder of its more subtle, yet more customary laws." We know not, whether Mr. Bulwer has ever followed out his purpose ; but we have no doubt, that the vindication would be ingenious and eloquent, and that he would make Chesterfield an object of admiration and gratitude. He would, we think, select the two following passages as examples of the benevolent spirit, and we can easily imagine his method of analyzing and applying them in support of the benevolent theory.

"With a passionate desire of pleasing everybody, I came, by degrees, to please some ; and, I can assure you, that what little figure I have made in the world, has been much more owing to that passionate desire I had of pleasing universally, than to any intrinsic merit or sound knowledge I might ever have been master of. My passion for pleasing was so strong (and I am very glad it was so), that I own to you fairly, I wished to make every woman I saw in love with me, and every man I met with admire me. Without this passion for the object, I should never have been so attentive to the means ; and I own, I cannot conceive how it is possible for any man of

good nature and good sense to be without this passion. Does not good nature incline us to please all those we converse with, of whatever rank or station they may be? And does not good sense and common observation show, of what infinite use it is to please? Oh! but one may please by the good qualities of the heart, and the knowledge of the head, without that fashionable air, address, and manner, which is mere tinsel. I deny it. A man may be esteemed and respected, but I defy him to please without them. Moreover, at your age, I would not have contented myself with barely pleasing. I wanted to shine, and to distinguish myself in the world as a man of fashion and gallantry, as well as business. And that ambition or vanity, call it what you please, was a right one; it hurt nobody, and made me exert whatever talents I had. It is the spring of a thousand right and good things."—*Letters to his Son*, p. 423.

"There is, in all good company, a fashionable air, countenance, manner, and phraseology, which can only be acquired by being in good company, and very attentive to all that passes there. When you dine or sup at any well-bred man's house, observe carefully how he does the honors of his table to the different guests. Attend to the compliments of congratulation or condolence that you hear a well-bred man make to his superiors, to his equals, and to his inferiors; watch even his countenance and his tone of voice, for they all conspire in the main point of pleasing. There is a certain distinguishing diction of a man of fashion. He will not content himself with saying, like John Trott, to a new-married man, 'Sir, I wish you much joy'; or to a man who has lost his son, 'Sir, I am sorry for your loss'; and both with a countenance equally unmoved. But he will say, in effect, the same thing, in a more elegant and less trivial manner, and with a countenance adapted to the occasion. He will advance with warmth, vivacity, and a cheerful countenance to the new-married man, and, embracing him, perhaps say to him, 'If you do justice to my attachment to you, you will judge of the joy that I feel upon this occasion, better than I can express it.' To the other, in affliction, he will advance slowly, with a grave composure of countenance, in a more deliberate manner, and, with a lower voice, perhaps say, 'I hope you do me the justice to be convinced, that I feel whatever you feel, and shall ever be affected where you are concerned.'"—*Ibid.*, p. 430.

We have less patience with a theory of Chesterfield's benevolence, because it appears to us to be a part, and in fur-

therance, of his own habit of confounding things. We have regarded his system of exterior kindness as superficial and selfish. If it be in reality a benevolent one, it is so no further than as it pampers the sensitiveness and weakness of men, and their morbid craving for the signs of sympathy and honor ; — no further, than as it attempts to systematize whatever practices have been found to be generally agreeable among men and flattering to their infirmities, and then recommends these to all as the only practicable method of keeping up such a demonstration of good-will, as all can appreciate and make.

We know, that it is difficult to draw the line between good social dispositions and actions generally, and a sickly regard to false exactions ; and, to avoid useless discriminations, we shall venture to say, that we dislike much of the current language on the subject of pleasing. We dislike the phrase, “ trying to please.” It is deceptive, and the practice itself leads to effeminacy or fraud. It puts men in wrong positions towards each other. To shun giving needless offence is one thing, and most important. This passive good-will or negative benevolence is not sustained without effort ; and, as it is little noticed by those whom it spares, it is likely to be disinterested, and can scarcely do harm to either party. Then, again, to give innocent pleasure to others by active efforts and personal sacrifices in their behalf, is safe for all concerned. And to gratify our friends by our moral excellence and high reputation is a natural reward, though we should not propose it as the object, of virtuous action. And undoubtedly our customary civilities and attentions are in part designed to give pleasure. But Chesterfield’s “ passionate desire of pleasing everybody,” this endeavouring so to adapt ourselves to the dispositions of others, that admiration and gratitude shall beam upon us whenever we appear, and our very persons become idols, is not the prompting or expression of benevolence, and it is foreign to the true spirit and purpose of civility. There is selfishness on both sides, and mutual mischief. Men have no right to such a show of devotion, and we have no right to offer it. We are not placed here solely or chiefly to please or be pleased, even in the best sense that we can give to these terms ; but to be good and to do good. And, so far as manners promote

these objects (and we believe that they enter closely into the great work), let them be cultivated with enthusiasm, as virtues ; and, so far as they *then* give pleasure, they yield a natural fruit.

- ART. VI. — 1. *The Planter's Plea ; or, the Grounds of Plantations examined, and Usual Objections answered. Together with a Manifestation of the Causes moving such as have lately undertaken a Plantation in New England ; for the Satisfaction of those that question the Lawfulness of the Action.* 2 Thess. v. 21. "Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good." London : 1630. 4to. pp. 84.
2. *An Historical Discourse, delivered by Request before the Citizens of New Haven, April 25, 1838, the Two Hundredth Anniversary of the First Settlement of the Colony ;* by JAMES L. KINGSLEY. New Haven : 1838. 8vo. pp. 115.
3. *Thirteen Historical Discourses, on the Completion of Two Hundred Years from the Beginning of the First Church in New Haven, with an Appendix.* By LEONARD BACON, Pastor of the First Church in New Haven. New Haven : 1839. 8vo. pp. 400.
4. *The New York Review.* Number XI., for January, 1840. [Article 2. *Politics of the Puritans.*]

WE cannot pretend to say much for the first of the above works, on the score of novelty. In a very early stage of our labors, when noticing various tracts which relate to the primitive times of this country, we gave to it such a share of our attention as we supposed it to deserve.* And within a very short time we have done our best to recommend to the public the Discourses by Professor Kingsley and Mr. Bacon, the titles of which follow in our list.† Having thus performed our duty, we should not probably have been tempted again to bring them up, had they not been made the groundwork and justification for an extraordinary commentary in the pages of the

* *North American Review*, Vol. II. pp. 145 *et seq.*

† *Ibid.*, Vol. XLVII. pp. 480 *et seq.*, and pp. 161 – 173 of the present volume.